

Dear Friend,

I am sure I do not have to tell you that during the past decade science in the United States saw some very rough days. The public image of science worsened, funds for scientific research were limited, misadministered, and at times misdirected, and the channels of communication between the scientific community and the rest of the country deteriorated.

We would be less than frank if we did not admit that some of the blame for this must be laid on us, scientists. But much of it rests outside our community. Neither the executive or the legislative branches of the government, nor the news media have taken the trouble to attempt to understand the functions and needs of science in a modern society and to formulate policies accordingly.

In other words, "science policy" in the United States did not exist. In a way this was beneficial to science as long as, even in the absence of a formal policy, there was a tacit feeling that science is worthy of support. When, however, this feeling, based on flimsy and often mistaken considerations, began to falter, the absence of a "science policy", that is, the lack of an articulate and reasoned public attitude toward science, began to hurt.

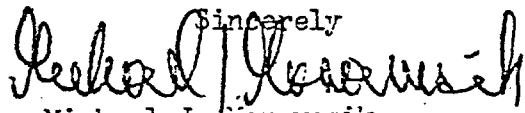
One of the glaring voids in this situation has been the absence of a national leader who could and would articulate such an attitude, or at least could stimulate public awareness in the direction of forming such an attitude. Fortunately, there is now a possibility of filling this void. In the person of Henry Jackson, we have a candidate who has all the qualifications to act as a leader concerned with and aware of science. His prodigious expertise in a broad range of fields, including matters pertaining to science and technology, is public knowledge, and he also has the positive and progressive outlook on life which is needed to sustain sophisticated activities like scientific research.

Jackson's platform on scientific matters is now in the process of being formulated. Input and help from the scientific community itself would greatly contribute to the forging of a stand on these issues which is realistic and attractive. I wonder, therefore, whether you have an inclination to aid this process. At the moment I am primarily engaged in gathering a roster of those who would be interested to help, together with the special areas of expertise they have and the extent to which they would be willing to commit their time on possible advisory committees or other collective bodies.

Beside the registering of such an interest, brief "position sketches" would also be of interest. A sketch consists of not more than 2-3 double spaced, typed pages, on which, in a very concise style, a scientific issue is outlined, giving its background, status, and proposed resolution, together with references to some documentation. Any such position sketch, sent to me, will find its way to Jackson's office for further action.

An improvement in the status of US science will not come by itself. We, scientists, must take an active part in this process of reconstruction. It appears that a very promising channel for such activity is available through the steps outlined in this letter. I hope, therefore, that I will hear from you soon. Please do not hesitate to phone me for further information, at (503) 686-5207 (daytime) or (503) 344-1137 (evenings).

Looking forward to your response,

Sincerely  
  
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\*For identification purposes only.